

An Important Message from Jennifer Toth, Deputy Director of Transportation

April is all about awareness for work zones, distracted driving

Today marks the start of **National Work Zone Safety Awareness Week** — five days in April that shed light on a topic that's critical to all of us year-round.

ADOT and transportation departments nationwide are ramping up efforts to remind *all* drivers that work-zone safety is important not only to protect those who build, fix and maintain our roads and highways, but also to protect themselves. About 80 percent of those killed in work-zone crashes are drivers and their passengers. Preventable rear-end collisions are the most common type of work-zone crash. Simple things such as slowing down, obeying signs and flaggers and preparing for lane restrictions go a long way to keeping everyone safe in work zones.

We'll be sharing these and other key work-zone safety messages all week through news media statewide, our [website](#) and our rapidly growing social media network. As always, be sure to share this information with your family members and friends, especially those who are new to driving and might not yet have experienced driving in a work zone.

You can also be part of National Work Zone Safety Awareness Week by “going orange.” Wear your favorite orange shirt, dress, neck tie, jacket, pants or shoes to work this week and show that work-zone safety is important to you!

Distracted Driving: Are you driving blind?

April is also **National Distracted Driving Awareness Month**. Now in its third year, National Distracted Driving Awareness Month was established by a Colorado mom after her 9-year-old daughter was struck and killed by a driver using a cell phone.

A growing body of research shows that using a mobile device while driving inhibits a driver's ability to focus. According to a report just released by the [National Safety Council](#) drivers who use a cell phone or other mobile device experience “inattention blindness,” resulting in difficulty monitoring their surroundings, seeking and identifying potential hazards and responding to unexpected situations. As a transportation-industry professional, I hope you're setting the example for safe driving in ADOT vehicles and your own vehicles. Remember that

- your brain activity associated with driving drops **37percent** when you use a cell phone.
- you're **23 times** more likely to crash if you text and drive.

To curb texting, you might want to consider a mobile app, such as Textecution, tXtBlocker or AT&T's Drive Mode, to prevent it.

In closing, I appreciate the comments and suggestions I've received about Driving Safety Home. Some of you have informed me that you can't open linked web sites or videos from our intranet. We have some limitations and restrictions to our online communication tools. I apologize; and although it's not required, I hope you'll consider checking out some of this information from another computer if you're interested.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "J. Star" or similar, with a stylized, cursive script.